(1) A Plenary on Information Science and Technologies for a Knowledge.

(2) A Sectional Session on Information and Communications Science and Technology.

As per the inputs available from the organisers of the Science Congress there was neither any agreement nor acceptance of the following:

(i) that India's progress in software has been service-based but not product-based;

(ii) that the world is moving towards China because of China's stride in IT sector;

Further in the presentations made, there was all-round appreciation and recognition that India has made great strides in IT and that the challenge ahead of India is to emerge as an IT super power, in software and manufacturing, and enable a knowledge-society by integrating information technology to the core of science, technological and economic activities.

(c) Does not arise.

ATMs in Post Offices in Karnataka

927. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to install ATMs in post offices of Karnataka;

(b) if so, how many post offices have been identified for this purpose in the State;

(c) whether some banks have approached the Department of Posts in Karnataka for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the decision if any taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) to (d) Although a number of Banks have

approached the Government with proposals to install ATMs in selected Post Offices including those in Karnataka, the matter is at a conceptual stage and no details in this regard have been finalized.

Cell phone consumers

928. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cell phone consumers under various categories of cell phone operated by Government;

(b) what is the turn over on accounts of this cell phone industry;

(c) what is response of the public towards various schemes offered by these operations; and

(d) what steps are being taken to improve upon the quality of the services provided to the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Sir, both the Government-owned telecom operating companies *viz.* Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. (MTNL) provide Cellular Services. The number of Cell phone consumers with them as on 31.01.2003 are furnished below:

BSNL		MTNL	
Prepaid	672666	Prepaid	116579
Postpaid	594869	Postpaid	124405
Total	12,67,535	Total	2,40,984

(b) As on 31.03.2003, the total turnover of BSNL and MTNL on account of cellular services was around Rs. 133 crores and Rs. 226.87 crores respectively since launch of service.

(c) Response from the public towards the schemes offered by BSNL and MTNL has been very good.